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Subject: Hudson County Exec Tom DeGise rescinds letter sent to EPA: The Auditor

http://www.nj.com/hudson/index.ssf/2013/07/hudson_county_exec_tom_degise_rescinds_letter_sent_to_epa_the_auditor.html

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Hudson County Executive Thomas DeGise has rescinded a letter he sent to the EPA in January criticizing -- at the behest of 70 companies -- the agency's clean-up plan for the Passaic River. *(Jersey Journal photo)*

The Jersey Journal By The Jersey Journal

on July 28, 2013 at 1:20 PM, updated July 28, 2013 at 1:21 PM

Oops, on second thought, I didn't mean what I said the first time.

That's essentially what Hudson County Tom DeGise is telling EPA Regional Administrator Judith Enck.

According to **today's The Auditor column in The Star-Ledger**, DeGise -- at the behest of a consortium of 70 companies helping to pay for a cleanup of the polluted Passaic River -- dashed off a letter to Enck in January, urging the EPA to use a cheaper alternative for the cleanup.

At the same time the companies asked DeGise and other local officials to send the form letter to Enck, they encouraged the officials to apply for improvement project grants the firms were handing out.

DeGise applied for a grant and Hudson County received \$50,000, The Auditor reports.

But DeGise has recanted his own words.

"My letter on January 23, 2013 was written before I understood certain facts about the status of the clean-up and I am rescinding it at this time," he wrote to Enck on June 11.

County spokesman Jim Kennelly told The Auditor the first letter was a "mistake."

"There's no way to put any gloss on it," he said, adding the new letter shows "there is no quid pro quo" for accepting the firms' grant.

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